

## Memorandum

Date: July 1, 2019  
To: Mayor Vinis and City Council  
From: Washington-Jefferson Park Ad Hoc Renaming Committee  
Subject: Washington-Jefferson Park Renaming Recommendation

On January 14, 2019, the City Council passed a motion to “request that the Mayor create an ad hoc committee in accordance with council policy on naming of public facilities, to consider the request to rename Washington-Jefferson Park in honor of Edwin Smith.”

In June 2019, the Ad Hoc Naming Committee was formed and worked over the month to identify and analyze potential consequences and financial implications and ultimately make a recommendation.

The committee was comprised of:

- John Etter (former parks planning colleague of Ed Smith)
- Thea Lee (representative for the Whiteaker Community Council)
- Terry Smith (Eugene Parks Foundation board member)
- Caleb Sollars (skateboard instructor)
- Ross Druckrey (Skate Marketing Manager at Tactics)

The committee recognized that without the work of Ed Smith, the area now known as Washington-Jefferson Park would have been landfill with an embankment up to the I-105 bridge, bisecting the Whiteaker neighborhood and offering no public space for recreation.

The committee determined that the financial implications associated with the name change would amount to approximately \$400 to update the park entry sign with the new name. Other materials such as the hand-held Eugene park map would be updated over time when a new order is placed so there would be no additional costs.

The committee acknowledged that even with a name change the park will likely still be considered by many to be the Washington-Jefferson Park. However, renaming the park may help with some of the confusion between Washington-Jefferson Park and Washington Park located at 19th and Washington.

There was agreement that the nationally known WJ Skatepark should retain its name. A great deal of community outreach and branding went into developing the skatepark and it is widely known by this name.

The committee acknowledged that the Whiteaker Community Council voted in June 2019 in favor of the name change and the effort has received a letter of support from the Eugene Parks Foundation.

The committee recommends changing the name of Washington-Jefferson Park to Edwin R. Smith Park but retaining the name WJ Stakepark for that area of the park. The committee recommends changing the park entry sign to read Edwin R. Smith Park and WJ Skatepark. The committee recommends holding a renaming ceremony at the park. The ceremony would also provide an opportunity to share information about the new lighting and basketball court renovation projects coming soon.

For more information or questions, contact Parks and Open Space Community Engagement Manager, Kelly Shadwick at 541-682-4901 or [kshadwick@eugene-or.gov](mailto:kshadwick@eugene-or.gov).